

Your submission to Zero Carbon Bill

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Submitter Type: Individual

Clause

1. What process should the Government use to set a new emissions reduction target in legislation?

Position

The Government sets a goal to reach net zero emissions by the second half of the century and the Climate Change Commission advises on the specific target for the Government to set later

Notes

This is an ongoing process to work towards stabilizing the earth's atmosphere and restore pre-industrial levels of greenhouse gases and should be flexible to meet future challenges, but robust enough to stick to the goal of zero emissions.

Clause

2. If the Government sets a 2050 target now, which is the best target for New Zealand?

Position

Net Zero Emissions - Net zero emissions across all greenhouse gases by 2050

Notes

New Zealand is in a unique position of producing as much methane as carbon dioxide, and therefore MUST include methane in the zero emissions target. Methane is classified as a short-lived gas, but when it reacts with OH ions it breaks down into carbon dioxide via formaldehyde. So each carbon atom eventually becomes a molecule of carbon dioxide, making methane much more damaging than CO2 emissions. It is vital that research continues into reducing the amount of methane produced by cows, either by introducing new feed such as kelp or plantain, and by reducing the number of cows in this country.

Clause

3. How should New Zealand meet its targets?

Position

Domestic emissions reductions only (including from new forest planting)

Notes

New Zealand must be solely responsible and independent when dealing with greenhouse gases, using tree planting to off set emissions. However, this planting must be very carefully considered, both where trees are planted and which trees are planted. A large proportion of tree species should be native to restore forest lost by clearing, and not just pine trees to be harvested. Lodge pole pines are the worst alien weed and the most difficult to eradicate and this problem should not be increased. Many areas of New Zealand are not suitable for forestry due to fragile soils and likely erosion and slips following harvest. Forestry practice urgently needs to be reviewed and mass logging stopped in favour of logging smaller better controlled areas to prevent wash out during the increasingly frequent heavy rain events. The practice of leaving 'slash' behind must be stopped. Surely all the timber left can be used to make paper or firewood instead of being wasted and causing such a destructive mess.

Clause

4. Should the Zero Carbon Bill allow the 2050 target to be revised if circumstances change?

Position

No

Notes

The Earth is in crisis and we should be leading the way to restore balance and combat climate change. New Zealand must stick to its goals.

Clause

5. The Government proposes that three emissions budgets of five years each (i.e. covering the next 15 years) be in place at any given time. Do you agree with this proposal?

Position

Yes

Notes

This is a sound model which allows time for adjustment to new ways of living.

Clause

6. Should the Government be able to alter the last emissions budget (i.e. furthest into the future)?

Position

Yes - the third emissions budget should be able to be changed but only when the subsequent budget is set

Notes

This should not be an opt out option, but a mechanism to adjust to circumstances without changing the ultimate goal of zero emissions.

Clause

7. Should the Government have the ability to review and adjust the second emissions budget within a specific range under exceptional circumstances? See p36 Our Climate Your Say

Position

Yes

Notes

It is sensible to have the ability to adjust the budget in light of new conditions, whilst keeping the goal of zero emissions.

Clause

8. Do you agree with the considerations we propose that the Government and the Climate Change Commission take into account when advising on and setting budgets? See p44 Our Climate Your Say

Position

Yes

Notes**Clause**

9. Should the Zero Carbon Bill require Governments to set out plans within a certain timeframe to achieve the emissions budgets?

Position

Yes

Notes

Governments in the future must be held to a reasonable time frame.

Clause

11. The Government has proposed that the Climate Change Commission advises on and monitors New Zealand's progress towards its goals. Do you agree with these functions? See p42 Our Climate Your Say

Position

Yes

Notes

All these proposed functions are useful and logical for the Commission.

Clause

12. What role do you think the Climate Change Commission should have in relation to the New Zealand Emissions Trading Scheme (NZ ETS)?

Position

Makes decisions itself in respect of the number of units available in the NZ ETS

Notes

The Climate Change Commission is the best informed entity to make decisions regarding the NZ ETS.

Clause

13. The Government has proposed that Climate Change Commissioners need to have a range of essential and desirable expertise. Do you agree with the proposed expertise? See p45 Our Climate Your Say

Position

Yes

Notes**Clause**

14. Do you think the Zero Carbon Bill should cover adapting to climate change?

Position

Yes

Notes

The two are intimately linked, so it makes sense that adaptation to climate change be included.

Clause

15. The Government has proposed a number of new functions to help us adapt to climate change. Do you agree with the proposed functions? See p47 Our Climate Your Say

Position

Yes

Notes**Clause**

16. Should we explore setting up a targeted adaptation reporting power that could see some organisations share information on their exposure to climate change risks?

Position

Yes

Notes

The more information that is gathered and shared, the better the understanding of the risks and the clearer the remedies become.

Clause

Do you have any other comments you'd like to make?

Notes

New Zealand has a great opportunity to lead in many areas, including adapting farming practices to a more sustainable model. This could see a huge reduction in nitrate fertilizer application and drought resistant pasture, so no more irrigation which wastes millions of gallons of precious water. Less nitrates means cleaner streams and rivers. Use of new feeds for cows can significantly reduce methane emissions and the entire environment, both atmosphere and terrestrial can be vastly improved. Reforestation using native trees as much as possible will greatly improve New Zealand's environment and start to restore the 'Clean Green' image. All these changes along with a reduction in industrial and mechanical pollution will help to slow global warming and hopefully impact on the increasingly chaotic climate changes.